

*The estate of
Elizabeth Bathory,
outside of Paris
Present...*



*During a party for
which she is not in
the mood.*





I
NEEDED
HIM.











A MIDNIGHT OPERA

ACT III

CREATED BY
HANS "HANZO" STEINBACH



HAMBURG // LONDON // LOS ANGELES // TOKYO

A Midnight Opera Act II
created by Hans "Hanzo" Steinbach

Associate Editor - Lillian Diaz-Przybyl
Language Consultant - Madeleine Ange Blanche
Story Consultant - Christine Boylan

Lettering & Layout - Alyson Stetz & Bowen Park
Cover Design - Hans Steinbach

Editor - Luis Reyes
Digital Imaging Manager - Chris Buford
Pre-Production Supervisor - Erika Ternquez
Art Director - Anne Marie Horne
Managing Editor - Vy Nguyen
Production Manager - Elisabeth Brizzi
VP of Production - Ron Klament
Editor-in-Chief - Rob Tokar
Publisher - Mike Kiley
President and C.O.O. - John Parker
C.E.O. and Chief Creative Officer - Stuart Levy

A  Manga

TOKYOPOP Inc.
5900 Wilshire Blvd. Suite 2000
Los Angeles, CA 90036

E-mail: info@TOKYOPOP.com
Come visit us online at www.TOKYOPOP.com

A Midnight Opera Vol. 3: All rights reserved. No portion of this book may be
© 2006 Hans Steinbach and TOKYOPOP Inc. reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means
without written permission from the copyright holders.
This manga is a work of fiction. Any resemblance to
actual events or locales or persons, living or dead, is
entirely coincidental.

ISBN: 1-4278-0007-3

First TOKYOPOP printing: November 2006

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Printed in the USA

Story Thus Far...

Scenario Acts I and II

1500s-1700s

Stiblück and Léroux (DeLaLune, two undead brothers), achieved what most of their kind would have thought impossible: they integrated the undead population seamlessly and secretly into human society. In their long, hard struggle, they allied themselves with the Colonists of Western Europe and stood against the tyranny of the Catholic authority, specifically The Order under the leadership of Cardinal LeCroix, a secret group of holy warriors whose sole mission was to hunt down the undead and exterminate them.

1610-1850

The witch Elizabeth Anthory was targeted by The Order, her family killed and her life ruined, until she joined with Stiblück and Léroux. However, her thirst for the blood of young virgins came into direct conflict with the undead community the brothers (DeLaLune) hoped to create. Léroux himself took particular interest in the salvation of Elizabeth, and for that she grew to love him. However, Léroux never learned how to return it.

1850

As centuries passed and complacency set in, Stiblück chose to retire his leadership of the undead and pursue a career in music. His exceptional talent from him highly regarded in the most elite circles of Paris, where he met and fell in love with Christine Gremont, a celebrated soprano virtuoso. A new life opened up for Stiblück. Feeling abandoned, Léroux worked to protect his brother from the dangers that lessened to the undead, much less fear for a human woman. For this he turned to Elizabeth Anthory, whose care for Stiblück's affliction was the breath of Christine. Stiblück, heartbroken, vanished, leaving only a grief-stricken Léroux and an increasingly frail Elizabeth to lead the undead.

A hundred fifty years later

Stiblück re-emerges as an underground goth metal sensation. He has fallen in love with yet another human woman, Dahlia Whyte, with whom he would have run away from Europe forever if it were not for the confluence of his past's myriad strains on his immediate present. The Order has regenerated and renewed its crusade against the undead. The price DeLaLune fought so hard to establish has frayed. Once again, his brother looks to him to save it all; a brother who Stiblück now knows had something to do with the horrible death of his once-beloved Christine.

Now...

Léroux and Stiblück return to Paris from Prague, where they would have fallen to the machinations of Christine's undead brother if it wasn't for the witch's monumental change of heart after a conversation with our Dahlia Whyte in a Parisian bar. This change of heart infuriated Victor Frankenstein who had turned up with Elizabeth to capture the brothers (DeLaLune). And Cardinal Clement LeCroix, aware now that both the brothers (DeLaLune) and Elizabeth Anthory are once again together and in Paris, organizes a final assault on the undead, turning to a spectre from his past for help.

FOREWORD

Hans Steinbock is about to start drawing my manga series *Poison Candy* for TOKYOPOP. So I have taken a great interest in *A Midnight Opera*. I wanted to be sure that this is the right guy to be interpreting my script. Now that the series is done, I'm reassured.

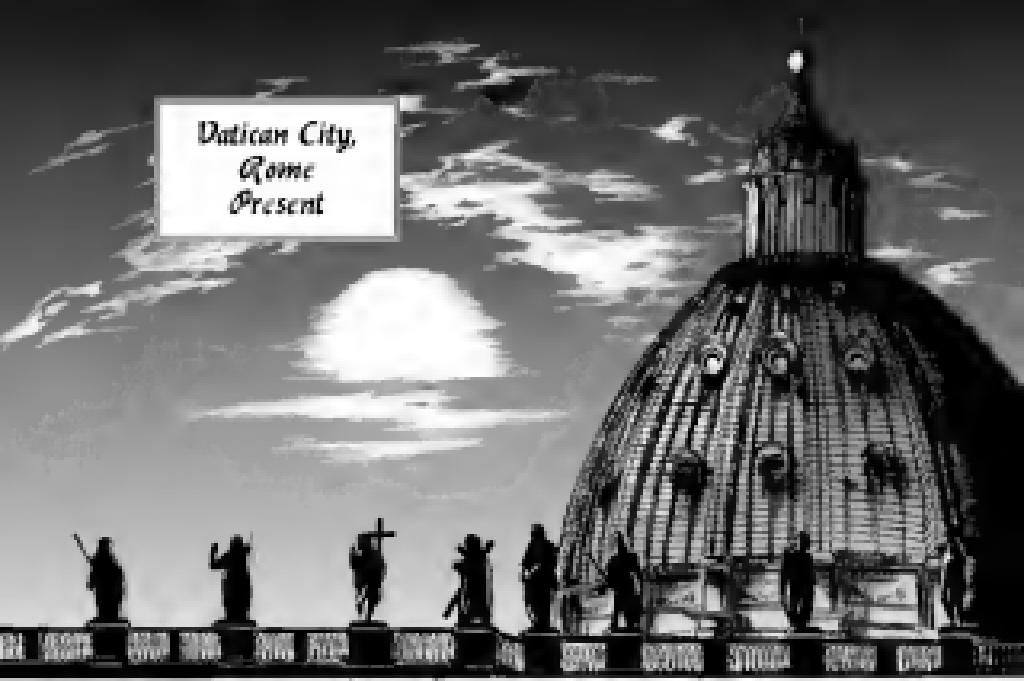
Hanzo couldn't have a more different background from my own. Until I was nineteen, I had barely set foot outside the county where I was born. I was twenty-five the first time I flew in a plane. Hanzo grew up travelling constantly, soaking up the cultures of a dozen different countries, the religions, the languages, the art and the music. His world spanned continents. I rarely met anyone who didn't have the same accent as me. But when I read *A Midnight Opera*, I recognise Hanzo's hero, Einblick DeLaLune is my fantasy alter ego. This is a character who speaks to every self-obsessed introverted fantastist who ever dreamed of getting up on a stage and blowing an audience away with ear-splitting guitar licks. Ein has it all— the moody, pale degenerate beauty, the doomed love affairs, the dark longings and virtuoso skills with guitar and handguns. *A Midnight Opera* stirs a lot of memories of the stuff I was into as a teen-ager: horror movies like *Nosferatu* and *Night of the Living Dead*, The Gothic fantasy Gormenghast, and the poisonous Maldoror by the Comte de Lautreamont, Alice Cooper's classic album *Killer*, Underground comics and the degenerate art of David Edward Britton. Still, when I tried to put my finger on why this character is the perfect synthesis of everything that made my teen years bearable, I couldn't quite figure it out.

Einblick DeLaLune is a beautiful loser in the style of Arthur Rimbaud and Jim Morrison. His lover is called Dahlia Whyte – an inversion of the Black Dahlia – the most famous, haunting victim of psychopathic murder of the 20th Century. It is the inversions and contradictions that make Ein so fascinating. He is a Pacifist and a Zombie Killer. He is Degenerate, Christian, Undead. When shadows fall across his face, his eye is transformed into the white orb of the full moon. All this is good. But there's one more element that made the connection, that reached out across the years. I spotted it in my third reading. It's the cigarettes, dummy! Einblick DeLaLune is a Smoker. In this brave new 21st Century world I had almost forgotten why smoking is cool. It's right there on the pack in black and white. "Smoking is bad for you" It gives you cancer and messes your heart and lungs and ultimately it will kill you. Every drag you take brings you a step closer to a miserable death. That's why smoking is cool. And Einblick smokes so very well, he uses a Zippo lighter. The cigarette hangs from his lips at precisely the right angle. He exhales through the nose. He flicks his cigarette butt in a perfect arc across the face of the moon.

There are all kinds of reasons for digging this series: the languorous beauty of the art, the expert pacing and page design, the delicate line work, the narcotic sexuality and poetic blood-spilling, but in the end it's the ciggies that did it for me. This book should carry a government health warning: *A MIDNIGHT OPERA IS BAD FOR YOU!*

--David Hine (*Strange Embrace*, *Spasen*, *Destrier X*)

Vatican City,
Rome
Present



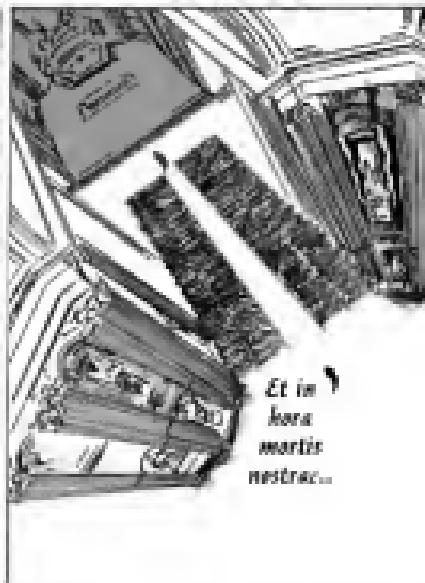
Dominus tecum
Benedicta tu in mulieribus
Et benedictus
Et benedictus
fructus ventris
Benedictus tuus, Jesus.
Ave Maria



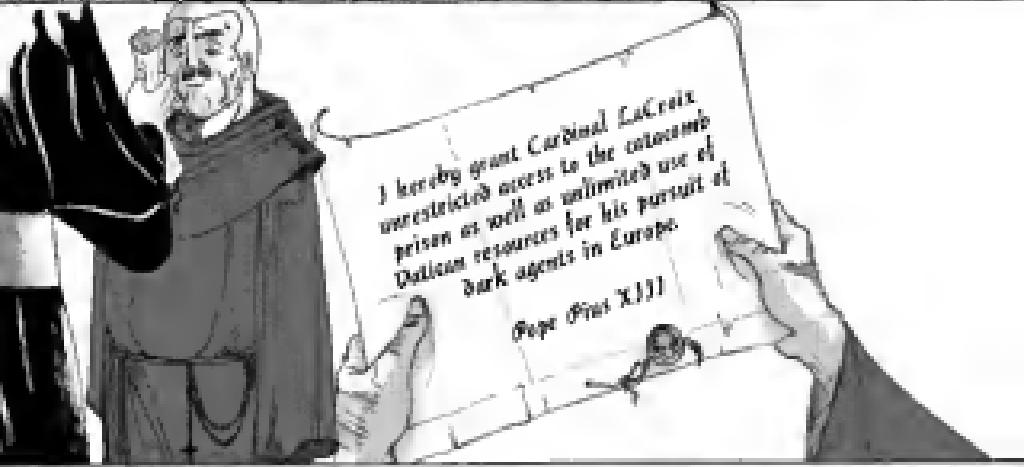
der Maria
Walter Gerd
Gerd von Walter
Walter Gerd
Gerd von Walter

LEMMER VII PONT PLAT









Wandeln wir daher
Gemeinde ist in verfallenes
Gebäude
Festlichkeit feiert nun
Gottes Freude Jesu
der Heilige

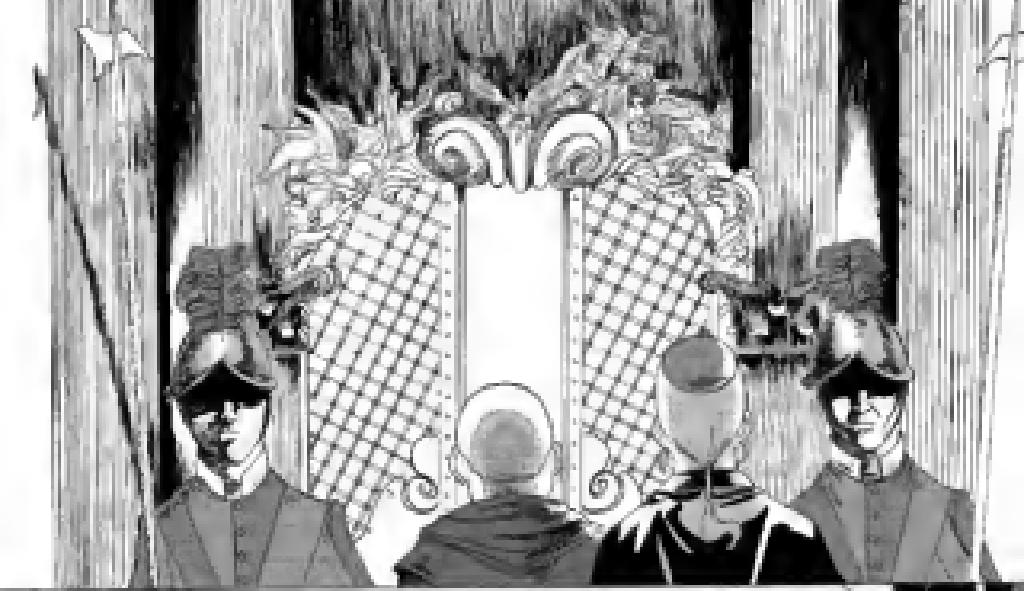


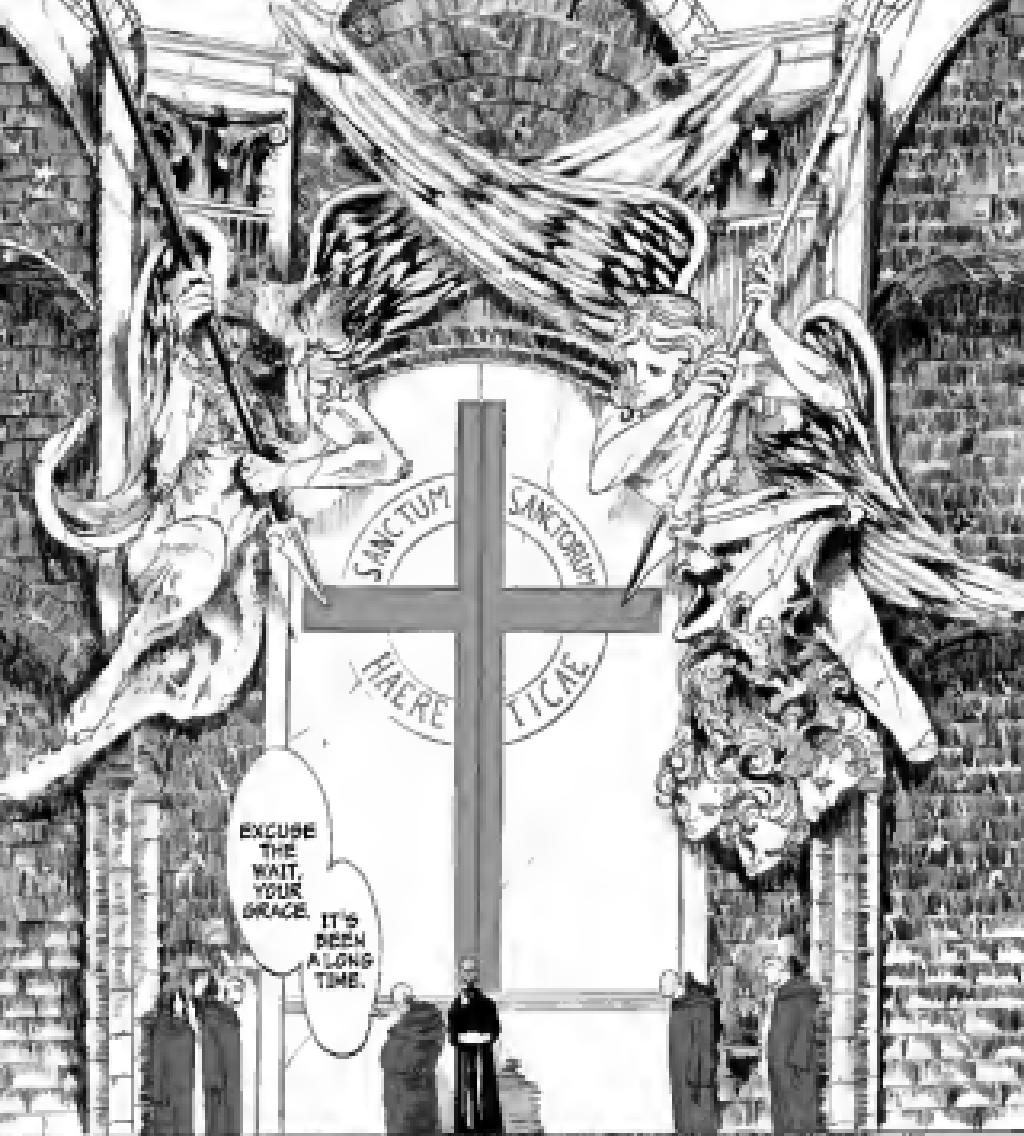
Ave Maria
Mater Domini

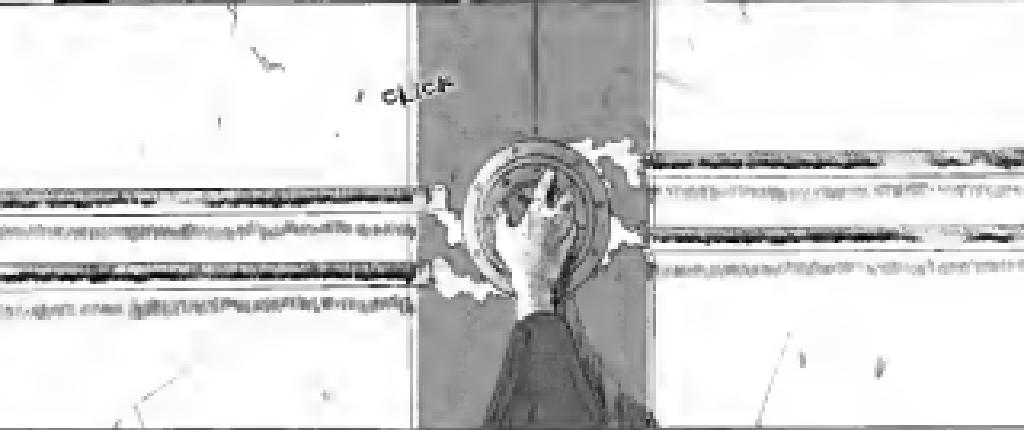


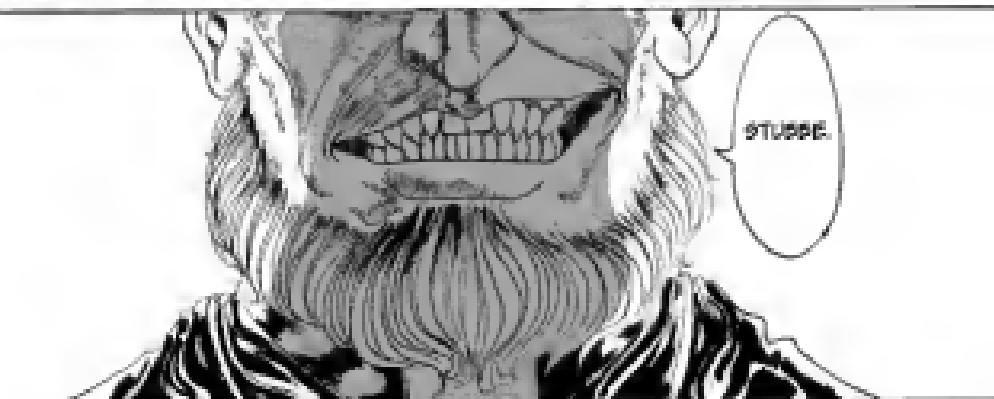
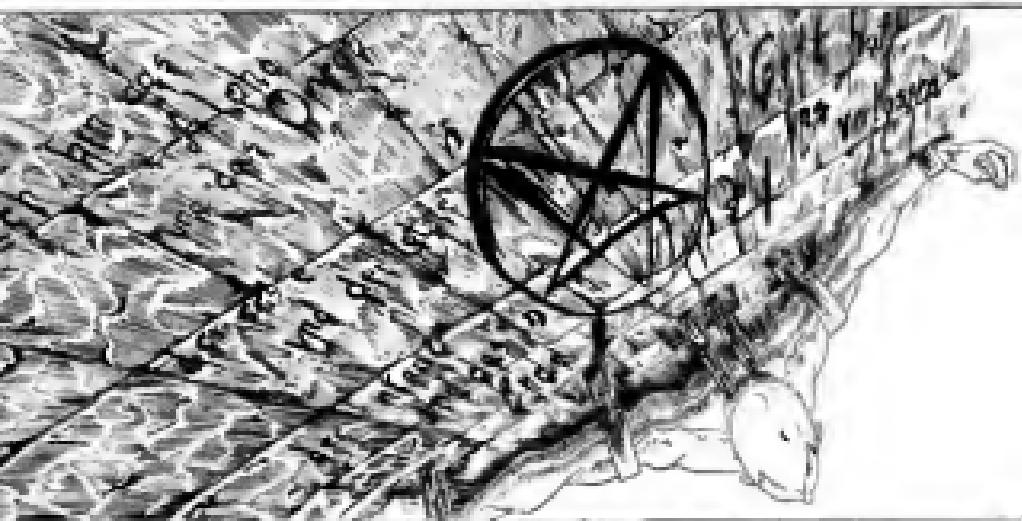
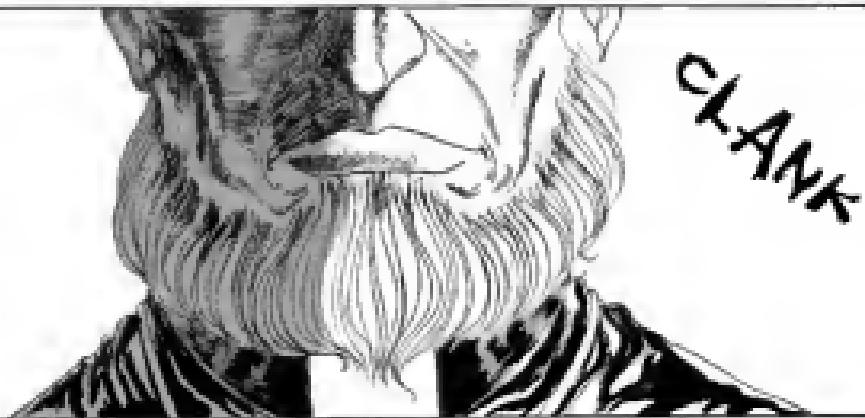
Ora pro nobis pietatis noster
Ora pro nobis...

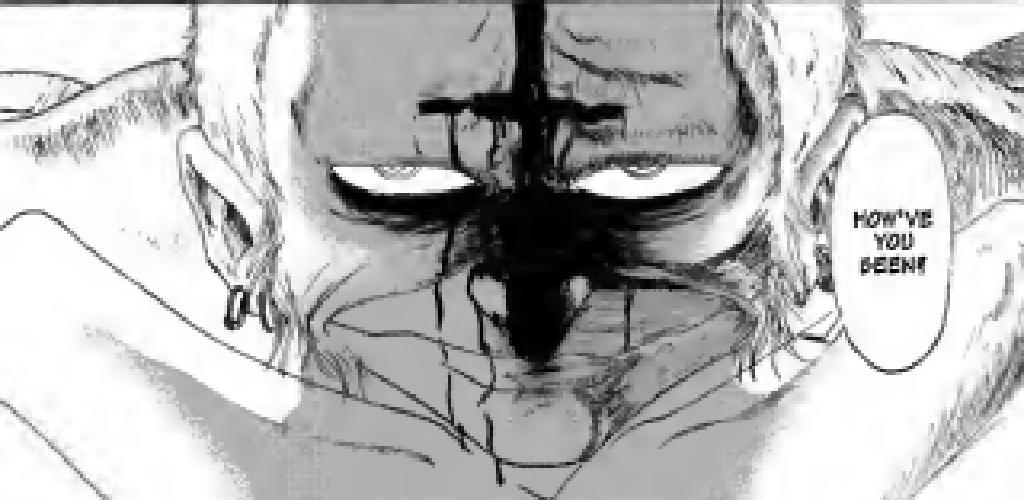








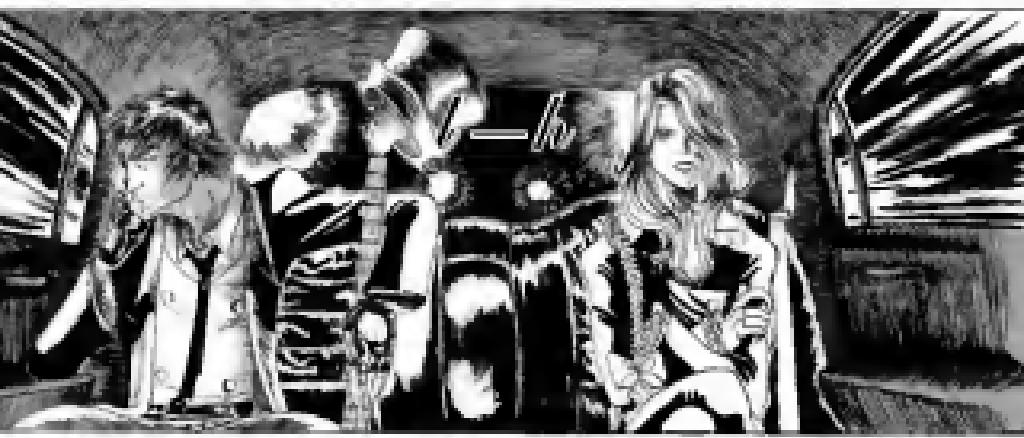






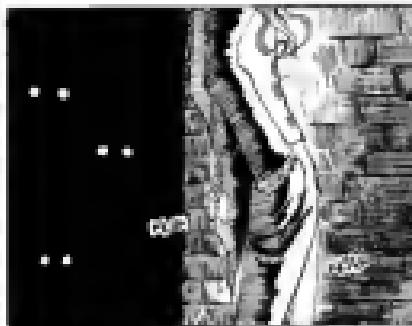
Paris
Present
A Gloomy Day

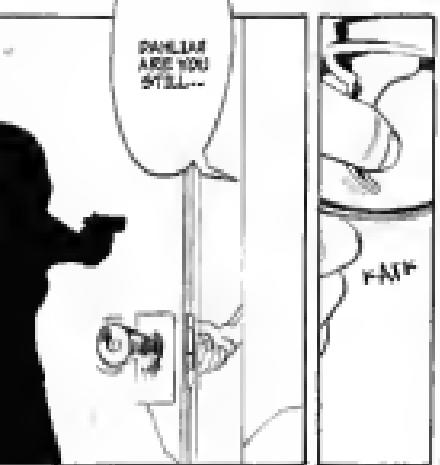
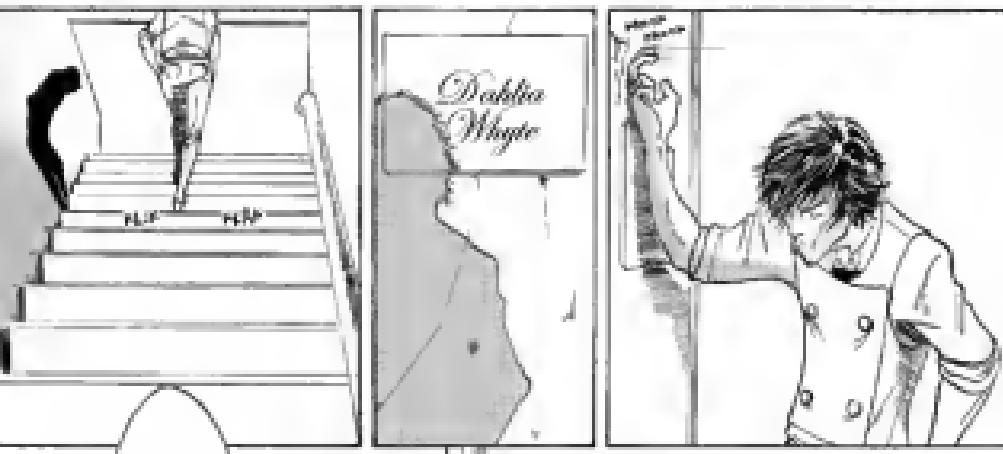


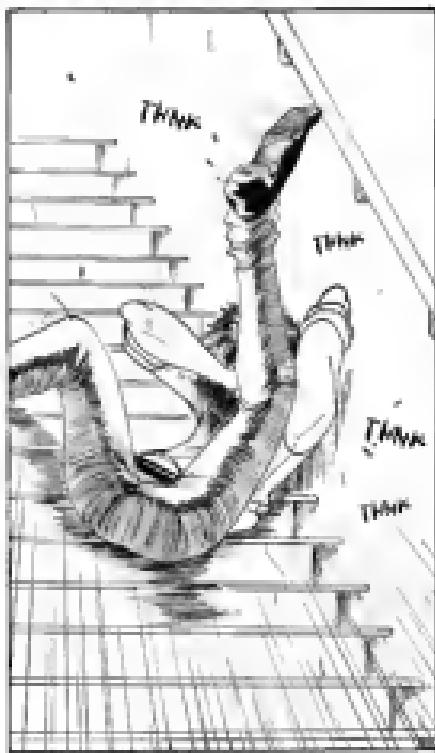


















Jerusalem,
1099

...DRINK





IT'S OKAY,
CLEMENT.
I KNOW
WHY
YOU ARE
HERE.

DRINK
ANY-
WAY...
TO DAYS
THAT
WILL BE
NO MORE.

TO MY
FRIEND,
REIN-
HARDT!





BUT
THE
CHURCH
HAS
OTHER
PLANS.



IT IS
MY
HOLY
PUTY.



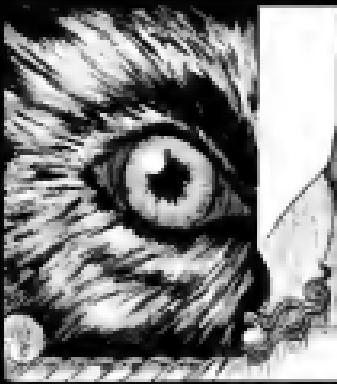
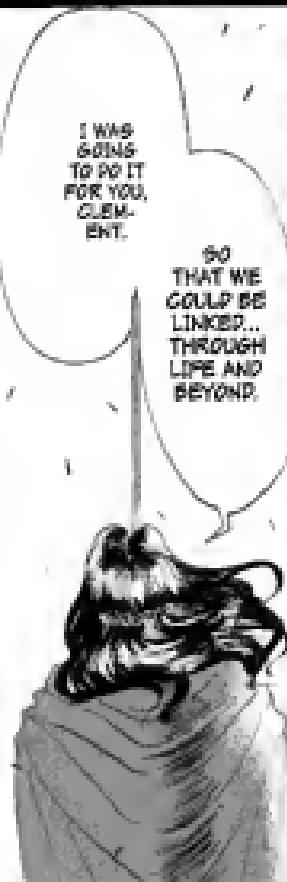
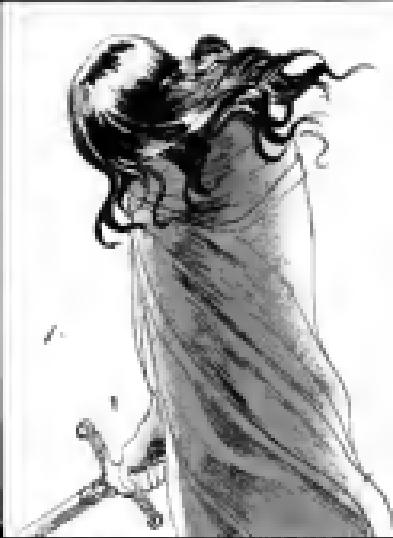
OH,
CLEMENT...



YOU
LOOK
PALE,
YOU
LOOK
TIRED.









IT
IS MY
HOLY
DUTY.



PERHAPS
THEY
CONVINCED
YOU THAT
WE WERE
BARTHIC.

BRUTAL,
BLOOD-
THIRSTY
CREA-
TURES.







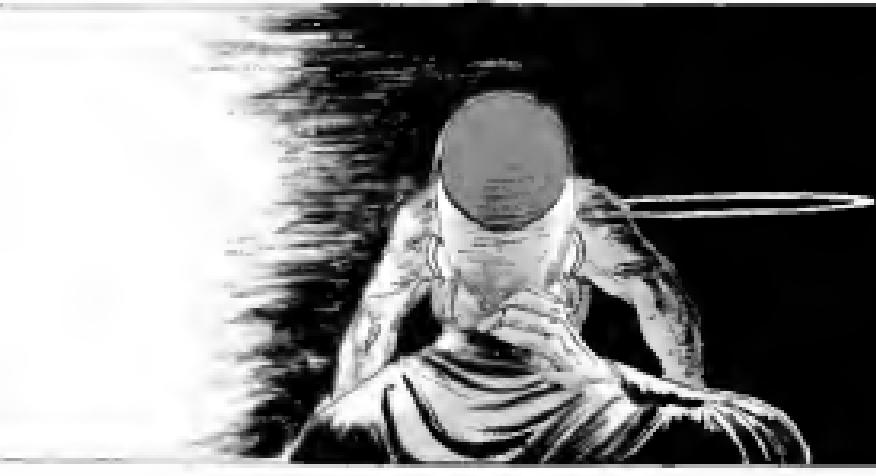






I'M BEING
FLIPPANT
ABOUT
YOUR
AFFINITY
FOR IT!







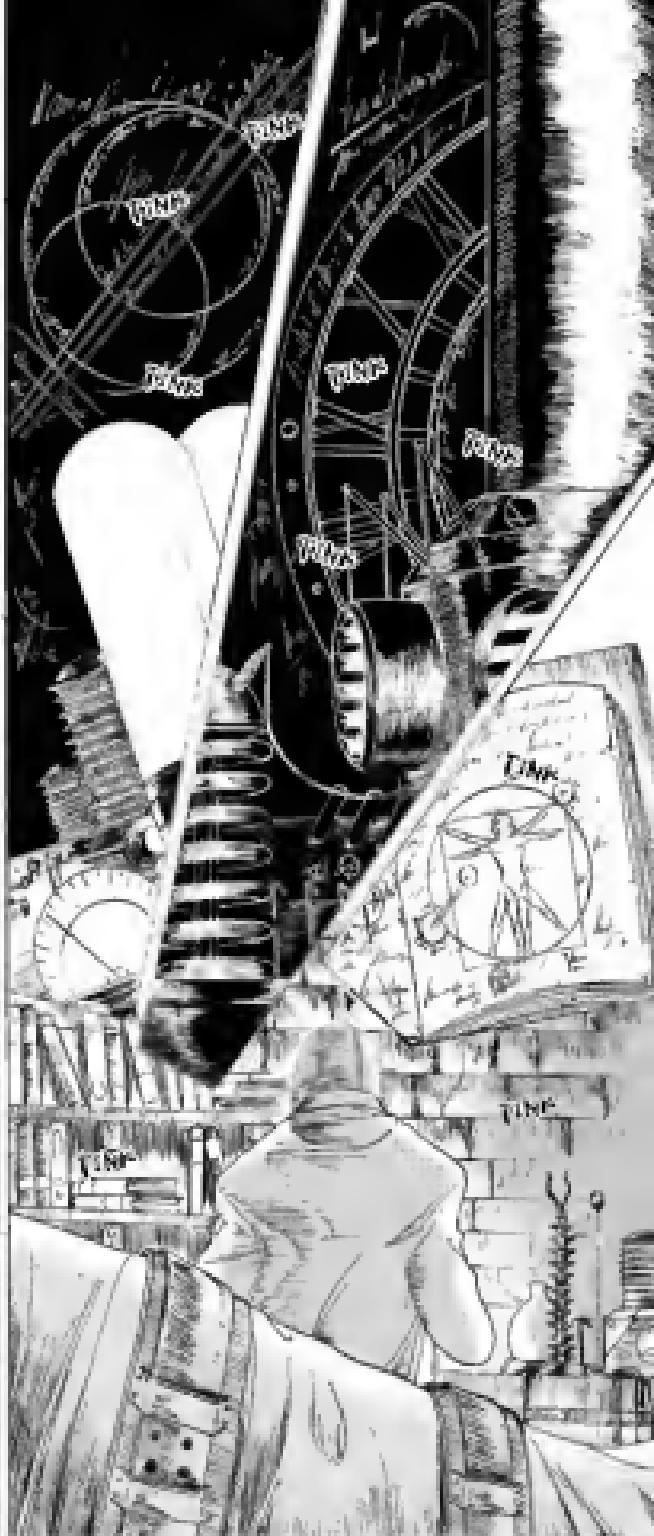
YOU
UNSHACKLED
ME FOR A
REASON

WE WILL
DESTROY
ENDERICK
AND LEROUX
DELAUNE...

...THE
LAST OF
THOSE IN
THE LINE OF
REINHARDT
DELAUNE.

OH, IS
THAT ALL?

Austria, Present
A foreboding castle in
the wilderness...





MALEVS
MALEFICARVM

w/cover

LIKE A
PHOENIX
THAT RISES
FROM THE
ASHES OF
DEATH...

...YOU SHALL
COME
ALIVE
ONCE AGAIN!

R
I
S
E
!



RISE!
AH
HA HA
HA
HA!



*The estate of
Elizabeth Bathory
outside of Paris,
Present*





*Somewhere in the
abandoned antiquity
of Paris, Present*



*In the skies
over the Vatican
Present*



...AND OF
THE SON...

I
BAPTIZE
THIS
CHILD
IN THE
NAME
OF THE
FATHER
...

France, 1559

...AND
OF THE
HOLY
GHOST.

FLYING
HORSE!
MISS-
SOUND







AS THE
ELDER,
YOU HAVE A
RESPONSI-
BILITY
FOR HIM.

THERE
MAY
COME
A TIME
WHEN...



WHEN
WHAT,
PAPA?



GRANDMAMA,
TAKE THE
CHILDREN
TO THEIR
ROOM



SHINE



QUELLE
Y A, MON
AMOUR!

HIDE
IN THE
BEDROOM
NOW,
CASSAN-
DRA!

ALLONS-y,
MES
ENFANTS!

WESCHAAA

WESCHAAA









IN
HOMINE
PATERIS...

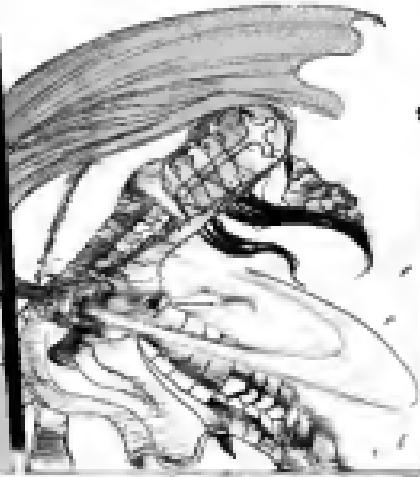
...ET
SPIRITUS
SANCTI...

...ET
FILI...

CLEMENT,
YOU HAVE
TURNED
INTO...

THE
MON-
STER!







EIN,
LEIROUL...
YOUR
FATHER
AND I LOVE
YOU VERY
MUCH...



AND IF
SOMETHING
HAPPENS
TO US...

NO
NO NO NO!



...RUN
AWAY
ALONG
THE
FOREST
PATH
...

IF WE
ARE
TAKEN
AWAY...



FOLLOW
THE WHITE
FLOWERS...

THEY
WILL LEAD
YOU TO
A SAFE
PLACE.

GRAAH GGGHHHHH

000



PULL
THE
CHAINS
TIGHTER!

HOLD
HIS
BODY
DOWN!



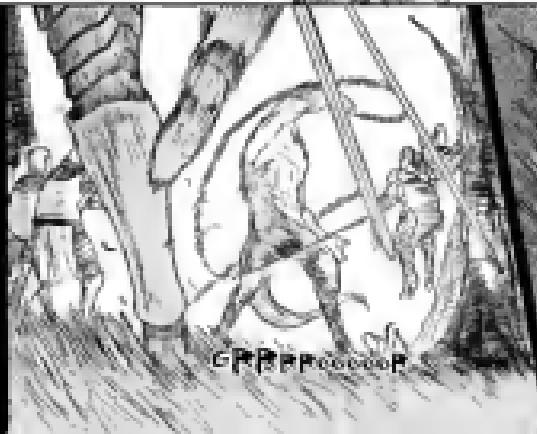


GRAAAAGGGHHHH!!!

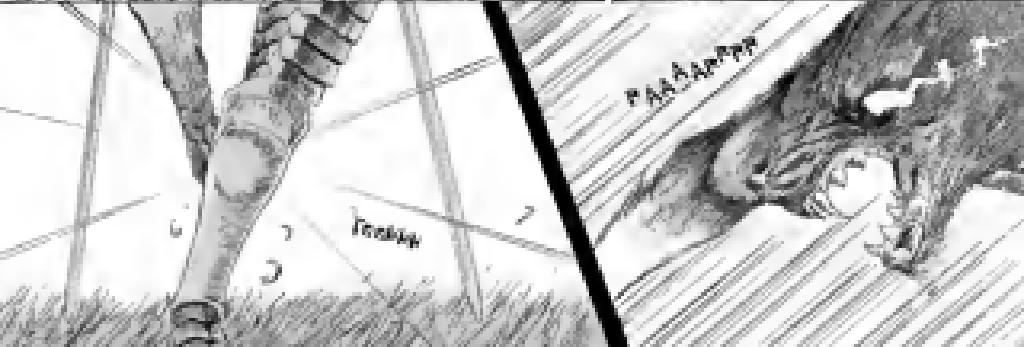
FUUUUH,

SHWWOOO











SSSSPLURGH!



KA-PWWW

WHAT
FOUL
DEVIL
POS-
SESSES
YOU!

I AM
HERE...

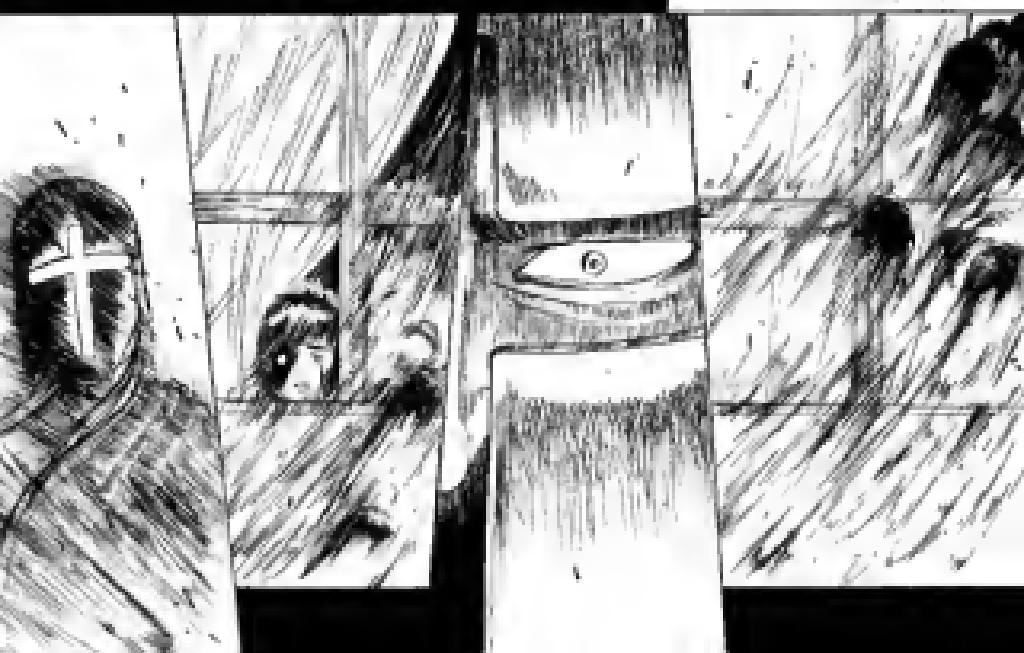
Clement
...

You've
disobeyed
the church
for years...
allowed me
to have a
family...

Dante
...

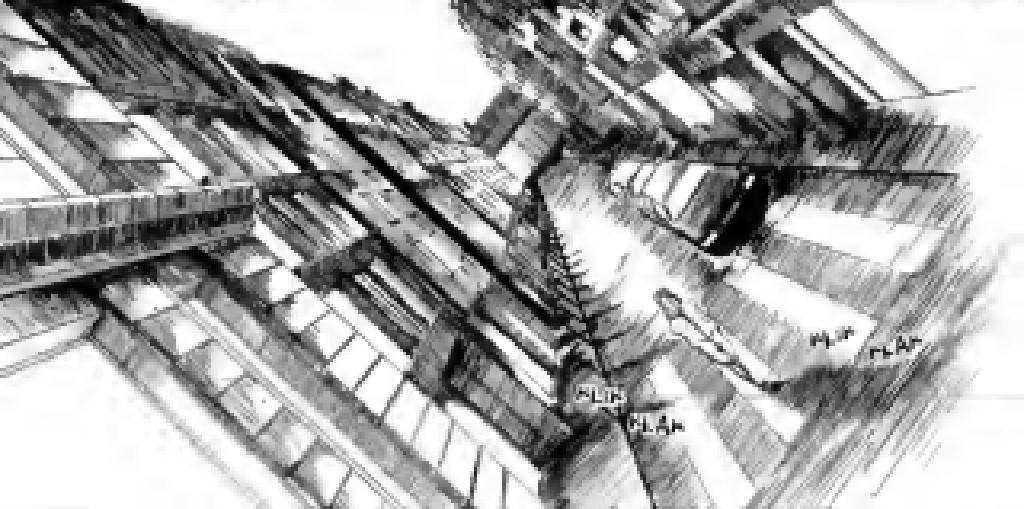








ATTACK.



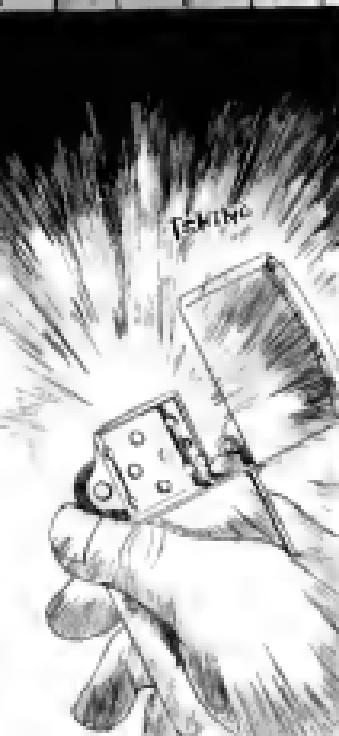
CHRIS-
TINE!

CHRISTINE!

No,
My
LOVE!
My
LOVE!



You are so beautiful...



For you, Dahila...

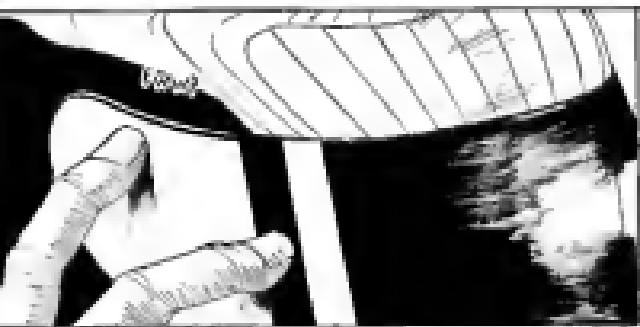


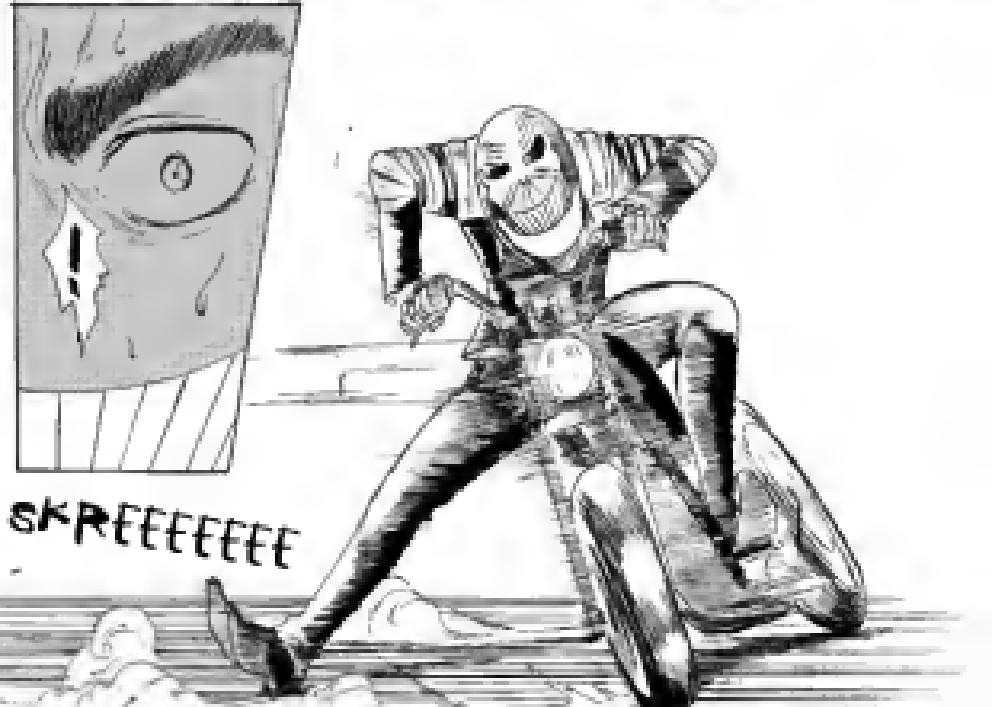
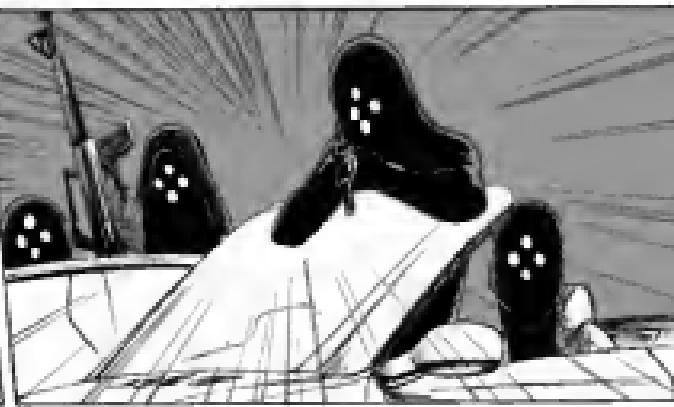
I'll quit.



Time to Rock.









YOU'RE
NOT
COLD UP
HERE.
ARE
YOU?

I
WOULDN'T
WANT YOU
TO BE
COLD.

THE CITY POPS
LOOK BEAUTIFUL FROM
THIS VANTAGE.

ONCE SO
QUIET,
AND NOW
HARDLY
ABLE TO
SHUT
UP.

I'VE HAD
TIME
AWAY
FROM
YOU...

AND...
UM...
HAVE
CONSID-
ERED...

WELL,
DON'T
CLAM
UP NOW,
DARLING.





LAURENT, YOU HAVE
GIVEN US
SALVATION.

I HAVE
COMPLETED
MY HOLY
DUTY.

Vatican City,
1560



THIS
MUST
NOT
GO ON.
WE
MUST
END
THIS
PLAUE



THE
ORDER
HAS
BEEN THE
ONLY
EFFECTIVE
TOOL
WE HAVE
AGAINST
THEM.



YOU
MUST
CARRY
ON YOUR
PLEASUED
ROLE...



...AND
EXPUNGE
FROM THIS
WORLD THE
KIN AND
KIND OF
PELALUME

YOU SEEM
TO ME
DISTRESSED
BY THIS
CHARGE.

PERHAPS
YOU
FEEL
UNE-
WANTED.

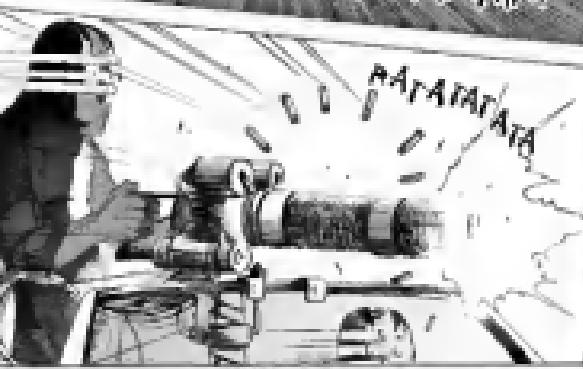
CLEMENT
LACROIX,
FOR YOUR
SERVICES
TO THE
PAPACY...

...I
HEREBY
NAME YOU
CARDINAL.

...Cardinal LaCroix...

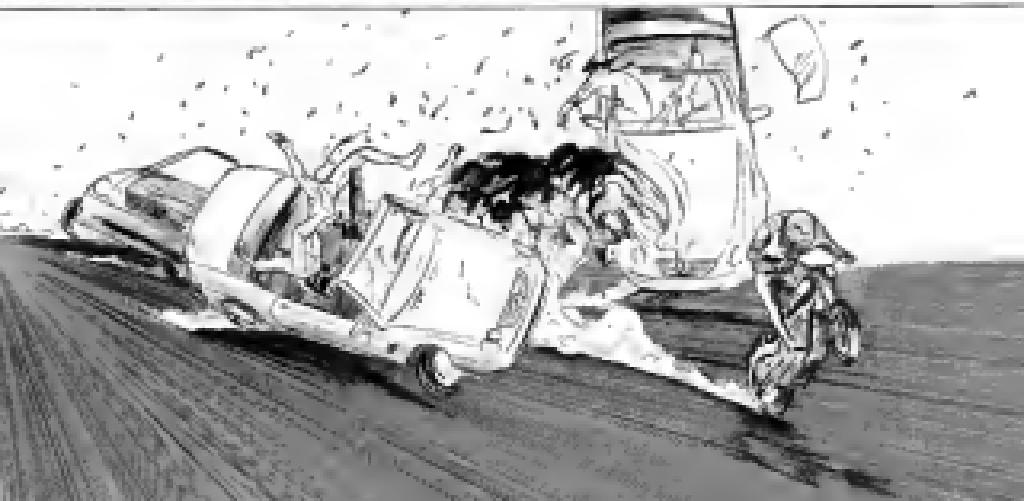
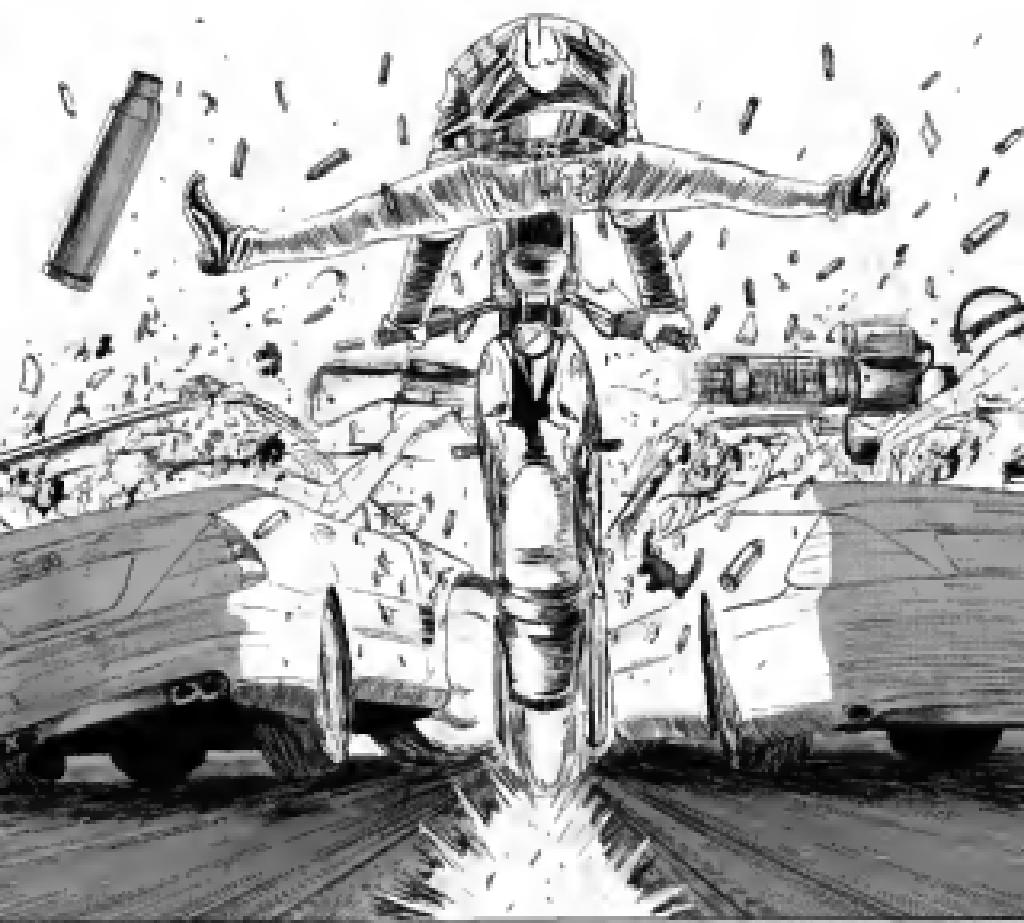














YOU
SEE A
MONSTER
IN ME

AM I
SEE A
MONSTER
IN YOU!



FREE
THE
KILLING
BEAST
WITHIN

THE
FINAL
SHOW IS
ABOUT
TO
BEGIN.





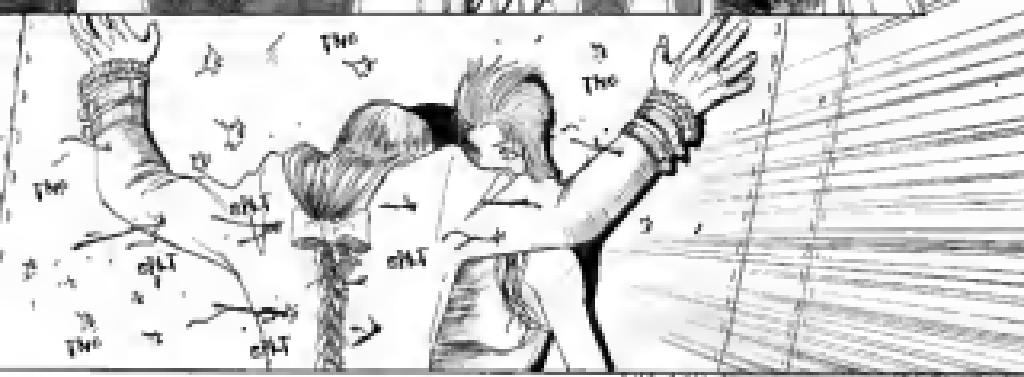


OH, I'VE
MISS ED
YOU SO
GODDAMN
MUCH!











GRRRRAAAAGGGH!

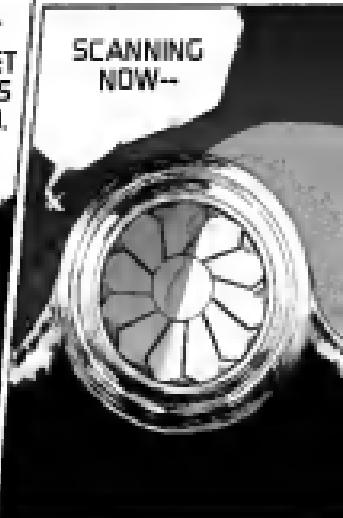
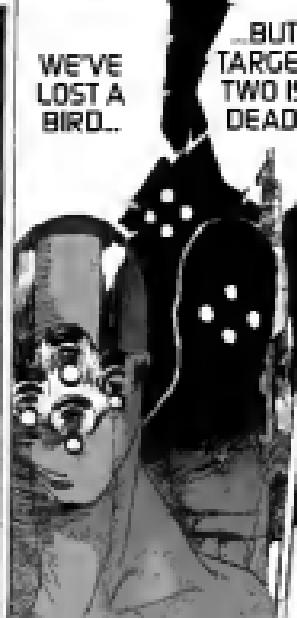
K K K
K K K
K K K
K K K



WE'RE
OFF
BALANCE!
I CAN'T
HOLD IT
LEVEL!

WE'RE GOING
DOWN! I REPEAT!
WE'RE GOING
DOWN!

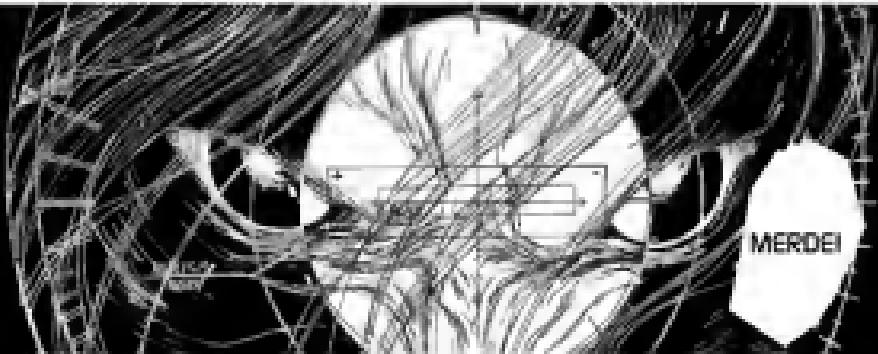
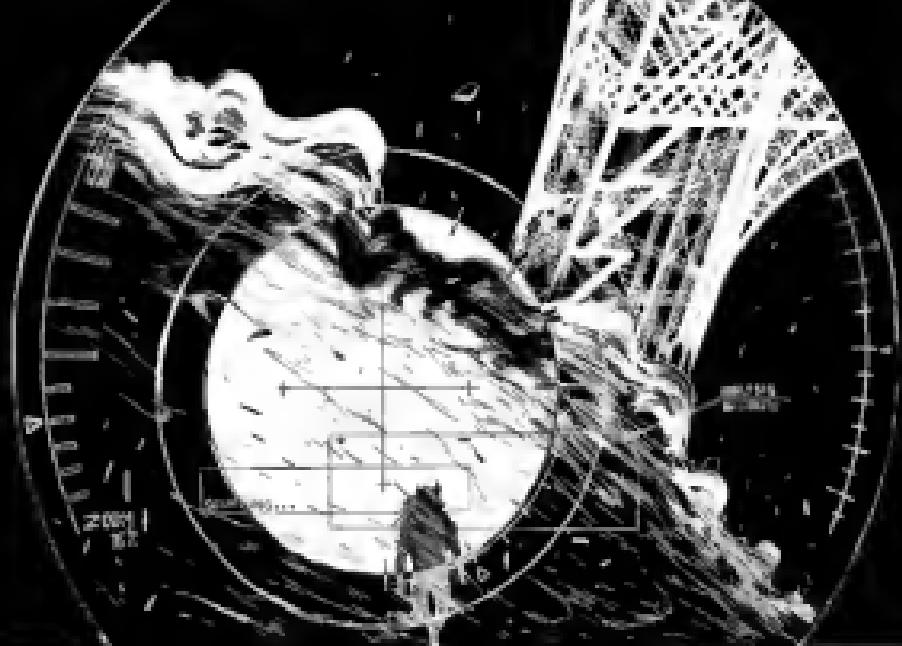




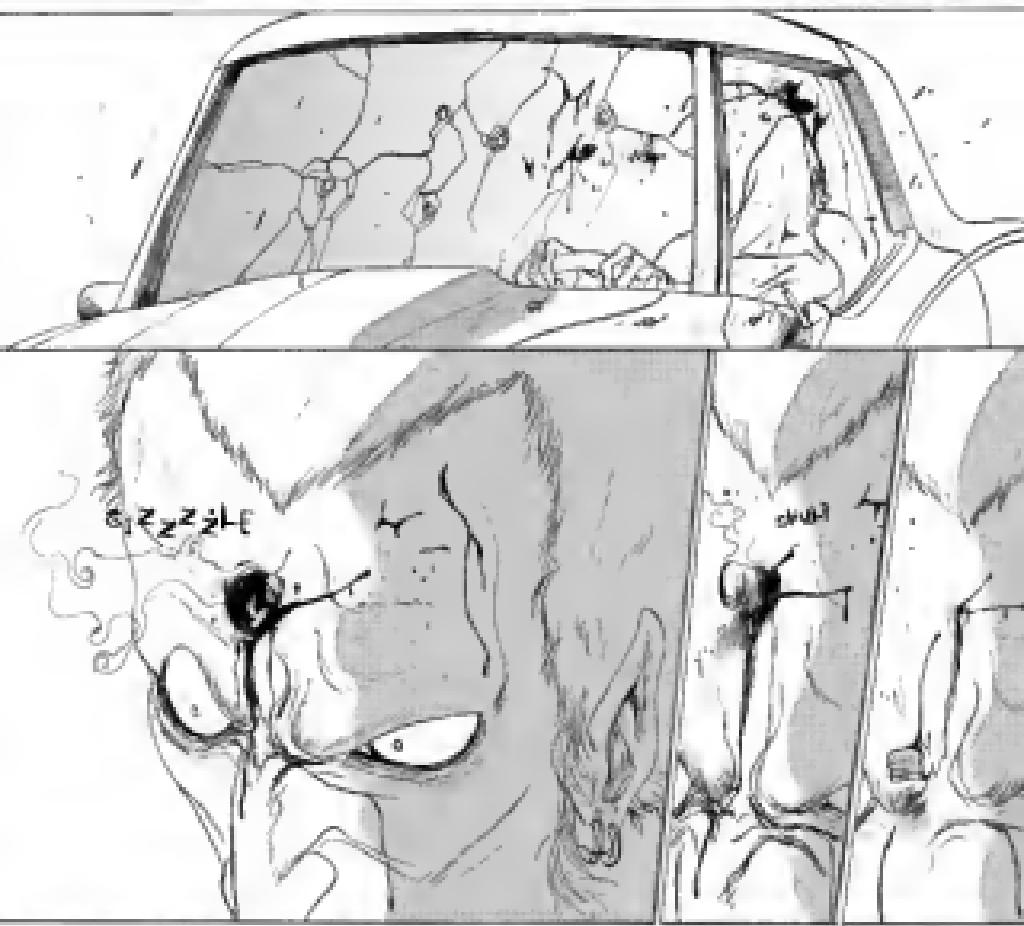
WE'VE
LOST A BIRD..

BUT
TARGET
TWO IS
DEAD.

SCANNING
NOW-

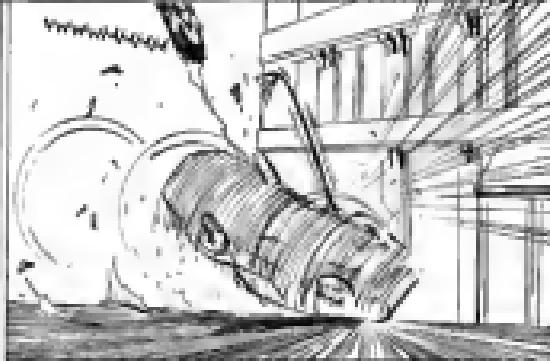


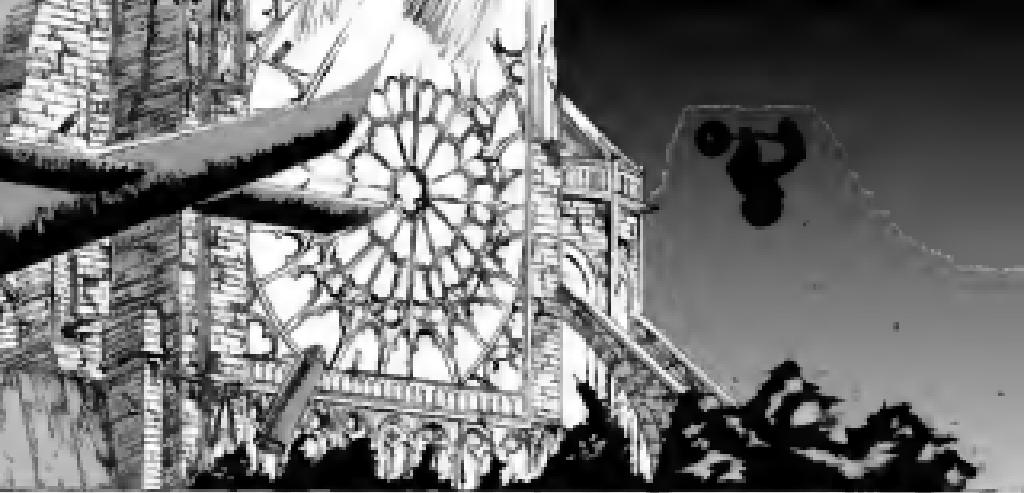






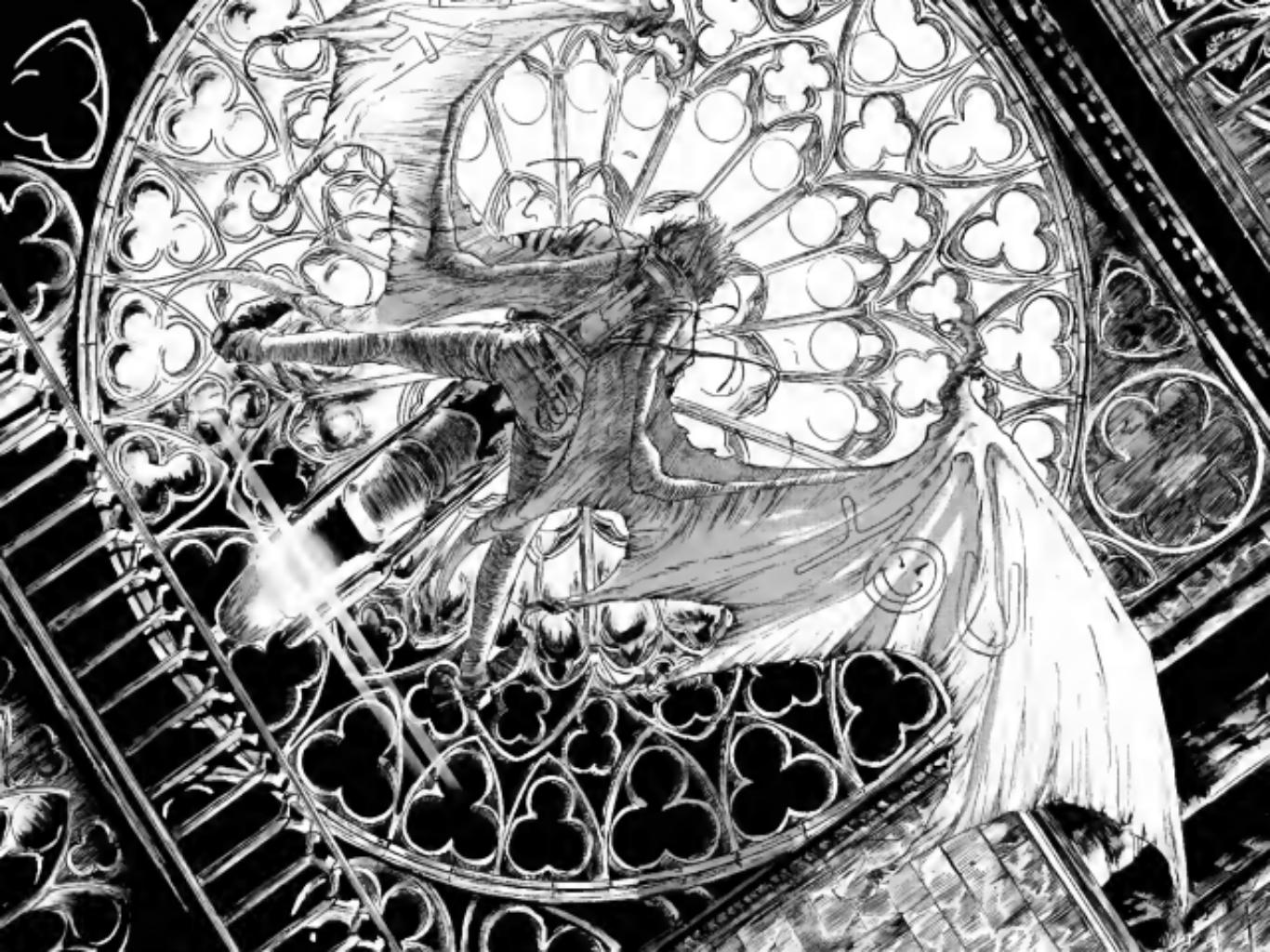






THE
ROSE
WINDOW?!

DON'T
YOU
DARE!











WOULD
YOU BELIEVE
ME IF I SAID
THAT THIS...

...IS THE
MOST RO-
MANTIC
THING
ANYONE HAS
EVER DONE
FOR ME



LE-
ROUX!



WOULD YOU
BELIEVE
ME IF I
TOLD YOU
THAT I'VE
ALWAYS...

...WANTED
TO KILL
YOU?

MMH
MMGH!



THIS
ONE
LOOKS
GOOD

LET'S
HAVE
US A
TASTE.

MY
FRIENDS
ARE
COMING.





KRISTIEP

NO!













AH-
HH-
GGG-
HH-
HH!

HA!
TRY
TO FLY
NOW,
CUTIE!

DARLING...
I...NO...

CHRRRR

It's not
fair...

STAY
AWAY
FROM
HER!

FIRST
TEARS I'VE
EVER SEEN
YOU SHER...

FORGIVE
ME,
LEROUX,
FOR
WHAT I
DID...

卷之二

YOU
ARE
KING

WHAT A
WILDFIRE
SCENE

WITTLE
WOW
BIRD
IN WUL!

IT'S
MISGUST-
ING!

卷之三





MAN-
KIND WILL
INHERIT
THE EARTH.







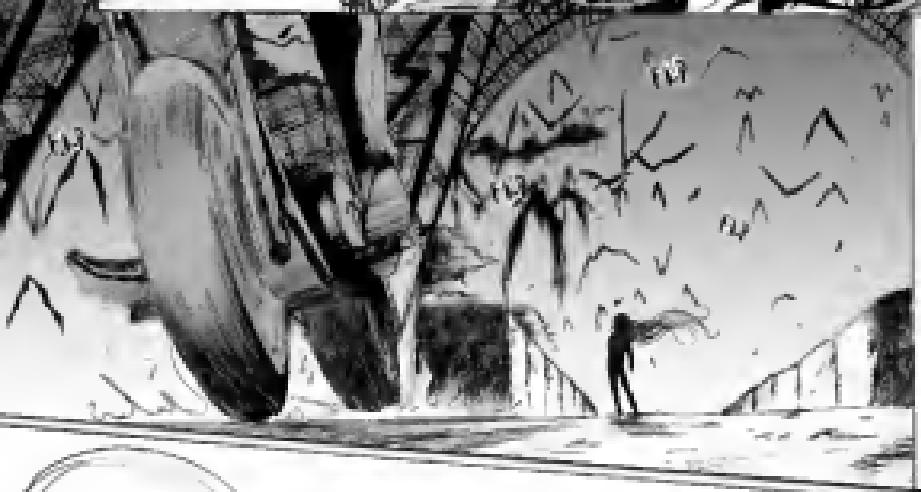








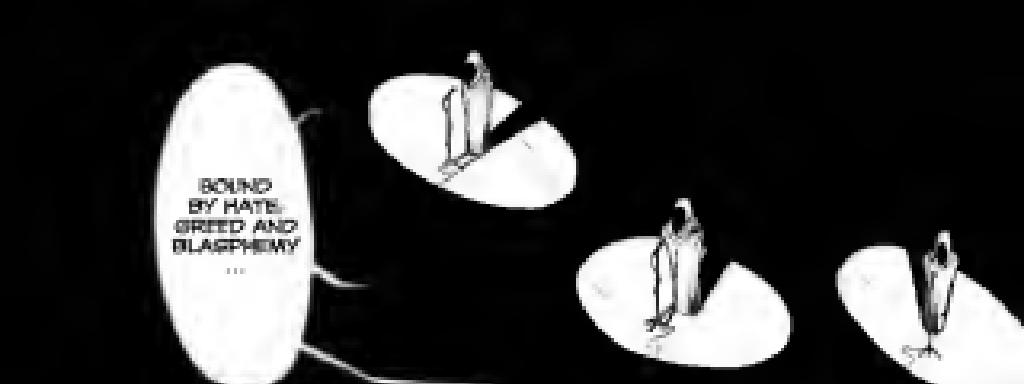




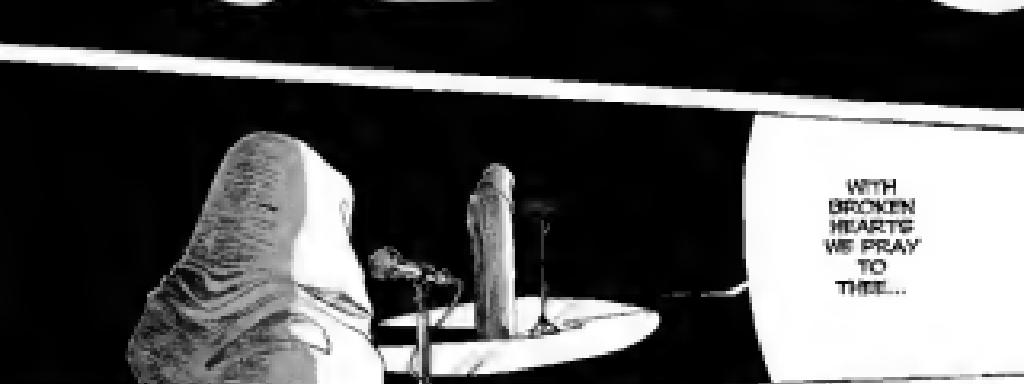




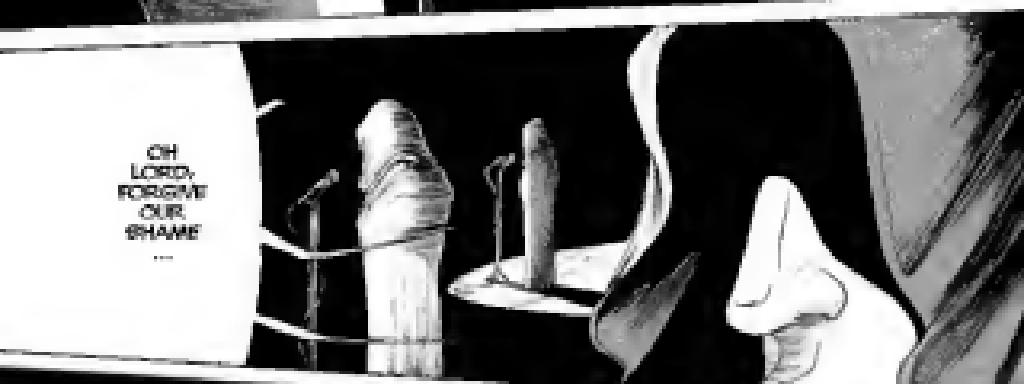
Paris,
the Rue Morgue
Present... around
Midnight



BOUND
BY HATE,
GREED AND
BLASPHEMY



WITH
BROKEN
HEARTS
WE PRAY
TO
THEE...



OH
LORD,
FORGIVE
OUR
SHAME



HALLOWED
BE THY
NAME!





SACRILEGE OF
THE MIND AND
SOUL! WHO THE
HELL DO THEY
THINK THEY ARE?
TAKING LIVES IN
THE NAME OF THE
LORD, WILL THEY
KILL US ALL?



TRANSCEN-
DENCE OF
VIOLENCE
THE DECAY
OF DECADENCE



WHEN
WILL IT
END? WHEN
WILL IT
END?



THROUGH
PILE OF DEAD
BODIES, ALL
I SEE IS
RELIGIOUS
TYRANNY
THROUGH
PILE OF DEAD
BODIES.
ALL I SEE IS
RELIGIOUS
TYRANNY

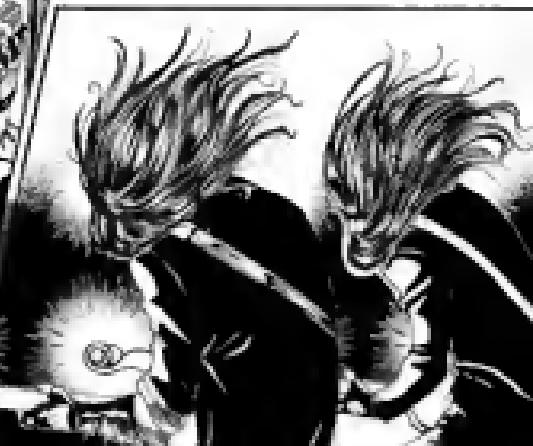


YOUR INNER
SANCTUM,
DESTROYED
BY HERESY,
NO SIGN OF
GRACE,
NO SIGN OF
SANCTITY...



RELIGIOUS
TYRANNY
!!!

YEAH!



THROUGH
PILES OF
DEAD
BODIES,
ALL I
SEE IS
RELIGIOUS
TYRANNY
!!!



GIVE
THEM BACK
THEIR
SANITY



THEIR
RIGHT
TO LIVE,
THEIR
DIGNITY



RELIGIOUS
TYRANNY
!!!











To be continued?



Rejected by death,
Condemned to live.
I was a stillborn
unbaptized before
I died. Now my soul
is restless, doomed
to walk the earth
for eternity. The
only thing I'm left
with is a howling
lament within me.

The Creator Speaks:

When I first started working on *A Midnight Opera*, a personal goal of mine was to somehow combine Manga with Heavy Metal, and since I was pretty much starting my career as a manga artist, the chances of that happening were pretty slim. Having finished volume three, I felt like I had to do something big. So I got in touch with a brazilian metal band called Hibria. They had just released their debut album *Defying the Rules*, they were fresh and exciting...they were somewhat like *A Midnight Opera*. It just felt right to have such a young and powerful metal band become a part of *A Midnight Opera*. (Hopefully it won't end there, I'm planning on taking over the Metal industry *evil laugh*) I hung out with Marco—Hibria's AMAZING bass player—for a while and talked about teaming up. He was just as excited about the project as I was. Metal be praised! So please check out Hibria, an In-Your-Face, Kick-To-The-Balls Power Metal band from Brazil taking over where Judas Priest left off!(And I mean that in all kindness*Hail Judas Priest!*) www.hibria.com

And thanks to all who have read my books and appreciated the story. I hope you enjoyed volume three and here's to many more volumes to come. Stay Metal!!!

—Hans "Hanzo" Steinbach

To download some hot Hibria tracks, visit
www.tokyopop.com/music





24

SILENT BUT DEADLY



Something
must've crawled
up his vest and
died.

What an
awfully
stinkin'

I'm
gonna
be sick...





Georges Braque
1882-1963

THE AFTERLIFE GUARDIANS

ARE YOU TRULY ALIVE?

In the collapsing world of the afterlife, two guardians face the ultimate question: Thaddeus yearns for answers, while Mercutio seeks his true love. Will they be able to find it all before it's too late?

ART BY
ROB STEEN
AND STORY BY
STORMCROW HAYES

A MEDITATIVE AND
BROODING EXPLORATION
INTO THE ENDLESS
POSSIBILITIES OF
THE AFTERLIFE.



© 2004 Hayes, Rob Steen and TokyoPop Inc.

AFTERLIFE



READ AN ENTIRE CHAPTER FOR FREE: WWW.TOKYOPOP.COM/MANGAONLINE

BLAME! BLAME! BLAME!

BLAME!

BY TSUTOMU NISHI

WALK SOFTLY AND CARRY A BIG GUN! CREATOR OF MARVEL'S WOLVERINE SHOUT!

In a future site with decay and destruction, Killy is a man of few words who packs one very powerful gun. He wanders an endless labyrinth of concrete and steel, fighting off cyborgs and other bizarre creatures. Everyone is searching for the "Net Terminal Genes," but no one is certain of the genes' function. The answer may lie hidden among the scattered human settlements of this vast and desolate world. Can Killy unlock the mystery of this nightmarish future and save the last remnants of humanity?



BLAME!

OT
OVER 18
AGE 18+

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT: WWW.TOKYOPOP.COM

TOKYOPOP.com

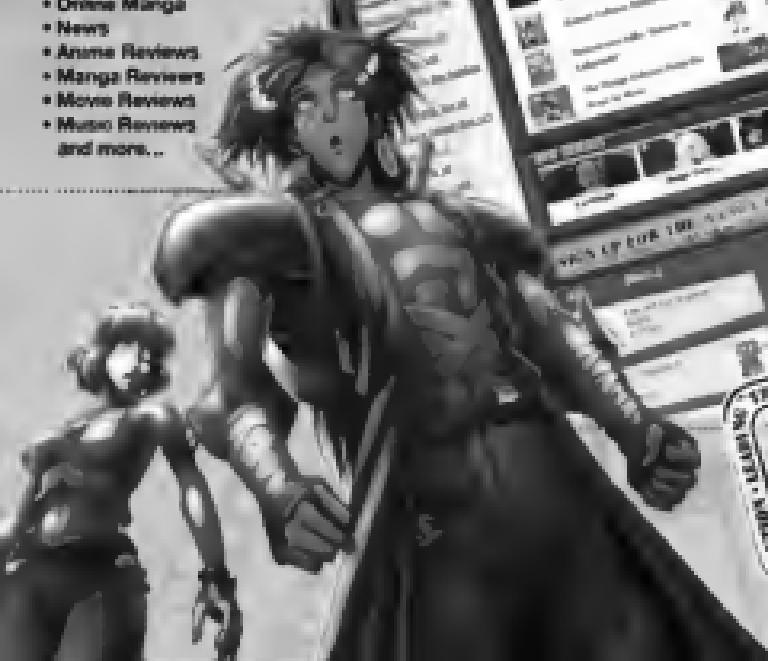
WHERE MANGA LIVES!

JOIN THE TOKYOPOP
COMMUNITY AND LIVE
THE MANGA LIFESTYLE!

CREATE...
UPLOAD...
DOWNLOAD...
BLOG...
CHAT...
VOTE...
LIVE!!!!

WWW.TOKYOPOP.COM HAS:

- Online Exclusives
- Online Manga
- News
- Anime Reviews
- Manga Reviews
- Movie Reviews
- Music Reviews
- and more...



© 2002 TOKYOPOP INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

WEEKLY SPECIALS
DAILY DEALS
GREAT BARGAINS

APPAREL • BAGS
FIGURES • PLUSHIES
WALL SCROLLS

DVDS • MANGA • UMDS
SOUNDTRACKS • POP
ART BOOKS • MOVIES

RIGHTstuf
INTERNATIONAL INC.

YOUR ONLINE ANIME SUPERSTORE

Can't find what you're
looking for at your local store?

**GET EVERYTHING
YOU WANT ALL IN
ONE PLACE!**

rightstuf.com
1.800.338.6427

THE OLDEST, MOST RELIABLE
ANIME SOURCE
OUTSIDE OF JAPAN



NOW AVAILABLE ON DVD!
ninja-nonsense.rightstuf.com

© 2004 Nonsense, Inc. All Rights Reserved. NINJA NONSENSE™ is a trademark of Nonsense, Inc. All rights reserved. Production Committee



BLANK

BLANK

Amnesia, action, romance,
and high school hijinks...

all in a day's work for Blank!

When Blank, a screwed-up secret agent with a serious case of memory, swallows the serum that makes her into a headstrong tomboy, they go down undercover in the most dangerous of territories—high school!

From
Pop Mhan,
the artist
behind
Batgirl,
Marvel
Adventures
Spider-Man
and SpyBoy!



© Pop Mhan and TOKTOPOP Inc.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT: WWW.TOKTOPOP.COM

LAUNCHING OCTOBER 2007

LAUNCHING TOKYOPOP MUSIC THE NEW SOUND FROM TOKYOPOP!

THE HIGHLY ANTICIPATED LAUNCH OF
THE TOKYOPOP MUSIC LABEL IS HERE!

THE MANGA REVOLUTION INFILTRATES
MUSIC WITH AN AMAZING ASSORTMENT
OF MANGA SOUNDTRACKS AND SONGS
FROM PRINCESS AI, INITIAL D, RAVE
MASTER, AND MUCH MORE...

HERE IS MUSIC THAT WILL MAKE YOU
WANT TO GROOVE, TO RIDE, TO DRIFT,
AND TO DREAM...



CHECK OUT
THE DEBUT
ALBUMS NOW



AVAILABLE ON
iTUNES AND WHEREVER
DOWNLOADABLE MUSIC IS
SOLD



THIS FALL LOOK OUT
FOR MORE NEW RELEASES!

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT: WWW.TOKYOPOP.COM

AMERICA'S NEXT TOP MODEL

NOVA'S JUNKIE

It's America's Next Top Model—

Manga Style!

Naka is an aspiring young model with a problem: her face turns up into a terrifying spectacle whenever she gets nervous on photo shoots! Naka's rival is Uni, the hottest model at their agency. But Uni's beauty comes from a very unexpected place! Watch what happens when Naka discovers Uni's secret...

Manga from one of Japan's most charming creators!



FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT: WWW.TOKYOPOP.COM